

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
----- 130282

O P 061103Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WSHDC IMMEDIATE 352
INFO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6789

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DEPARTMENT REPEAT OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR CY
SUBJ: CYPRUS NEGOTIATIONS: MEETING WITH BITSIOS

REF A. STATE 210911 B. NICOSIA 2659

1. I MET PRIVATELY LAST NIGHT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AFTER HIS MEETING EARLIER IN THE EVENING WITH CLERIDES. IN SUM, BITSIOS' VIEWS AND HIS COMMENTS ABOUT CLERIDES' CURRENT POSITION AND ATTITUDE TRACKED VERY WELL WITH NICOSIA'S 2659 AND I WILL NOT REPEAT THEM HERE. BITSIOS SAID THAT NEITHER HE NOR CLERIDES WERE HOPEFUL THAT MUCH WOULD COME OUT OF THE LATTER'S MEETINGS WITH DENKTASH IN NEW YORK NEXT WEEK, THE MORE SO IN VIEW OF DENKTASH'S FAILURE TO LIVE UP TO HIS VIENNA III COMMITMENTS. AS OF CLERIDES' ARRIVAL IN ATHENS YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, DENKTASH HAD STILL NOT DELIVERED THE PROMISED PROPOSALS ON TERRITORY AND INDICATIONS ARE THAT HE WILL PUSH FOR HIS "JOINT SECRETARIAT" AND PERHAPS SEVERAL OTHER PROPOSALS EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE GREEKS.

2. ON THE EC-9 INITIATIVE, BITSIOS SAID IT WAS TOO
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FEEBLE AND TOO LATER TO BE OF MUCH HELP FOR THIS

ROUND. HE REGRETTED THIS FOR HE SAID THE TURKS HAVE A DEEP PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR "APPROVAL" BY THE EUROPEANS -- THE TURKS DETEST BEING CONSIDERED "ASIANS," HE SAID, AND DESPERATELY WANT TO BE CONSIDERED "IN THE CLUB" -- AND THE EC-9 GOVERNMENTS COULD HAVE A STRONGER IMPACT ON TURKISH ATTITUDES IF THEY WOULD ONLY BE LESS TIMID AND RETICENT ABOUT USING THEIR INFLUENCE.

3. I ASKED BITSIOS ABOUT THE TURKISH ANNOUNCEMENT TO WITHDRAW SOME MILITARY FORCES FROM CYPRUS AND HE SAID HE DID NOT ATTACH TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO IT, THAT HE AND CLERIDES THOUGHT IT WAS PRIMARILY AIMED AT INFLUENCING THE U.S. CONGRESS. HE SAID THAT CLERIDES HAD ESTIMATED THIS WITHDRAWAL WOULD AMOUNT TO ABOUT 2,000 MEN.

4. BITSIOS ASKED WHEN I THOUGHT CONGRESS WOULD AGAIN CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY. I SAID I DIDN'T KNOW BUT HAD SEEN SOME INDICATIONS IT MIGHT BE AS EARLY AS NEXT WEEK. HE SAID THAT, AS I KNEW, THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT THE ARMS SUSPENSION WAS A POSITIVE FACTOR IN INFLUENCING TURKEY TO BE REASONABLE ON CYPRUS, BUT THAT THE GOG WAS DETERMINED NOT TO GET INVOLVED IN THIS MATTER UNLESS ITS POSITION WAS MISREPRESENTED BY UNAUTHORIZED SPOKESMEN. HE ASKED ME TO CONVEY THIS POINT TO WASHINGTON ALONG WITH HIS REQUEST THAT NO ONE IN THE USG MAKE ANY STATEMENT THAT WOULD REQUIRE HIM OR CARAMANLIS TO ISSUE A CLARIFICATION OR DENIAL.

5. BITSISO SAID THAT IF THE CONGRESS VOTED TO RESUME ARMS SHIPMENTS TO TURKEY THERE WOULD NATURALLY BE A VERY STRONG, NEGATIVE REACTION IN GREECE. HE SAID THE GOG WOULD TAKE SPECIAL MEASURES TO PROTECT THE EMBASSY AND U.S. INSTALLATIONS HERE BUT THERE WOULD BE NO WAY TO EXPLAIN THE MATTER SATISFACTORILY TO THE GREEK PUBLIC. THINKING ALOUD, HE SAID -- AND IN A "VERY FRIENDLY WAY" -- WAS THERE SOME WAY A "NAKED" ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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RESUMING ARMS SHIPMENTS TO TURKEY COULD BE AVOIDED. I ASKED HIM WHAT HE MEANT. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE AND CARAMANLIS HAD DISCUSSED THIS POINT WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY WHEN THEY WERE IN HELSINKI, AND CARAMANLIS HAD URGED THAT ANY LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO BE TIED TO FORTHCOMING MOVES BY TURKEY ON CYPRUS WITHIN A "MONTH OR TWO" THEREAFTER. IF THE ARMS EMBARGO WERE LIFTED WITHOUT SUCH A

QUID PRO QUO UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TURKS, BITSIOS SAID, THE TURKS WOULD CONCLUDE THAT THEIR INTRANSIGENT TACTICS HAD PAID OFF AND THE OUTLOOK FOR A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS WOULD BE BLEAK INDEED. BITSIOS ASKED ME IF SUCH AN "UNDERSTANDING" EXISTED, AND I RESPONDED THAT I DID NOT KNOW. HOWEVER, I ADDED, ALTHOUGH I HAD SEEN NO INDICATION OF ANY SUCH UNDERSTANDING, THAT DID NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT ONE DID NOT EXIST. I RECALLED TO BITSIOS EARLIER PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY TOP USG OFFICIALS THAT A FAILURE BY TURKEY TO BE FORTHCOMING FOLLOWING THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO COULD NOT HELP BUT GO TO THE HEART OF U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS. IN ANY CASE, I ADDED, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE -- FOR OBVIOUS REASONS CONCERNING TURKEY -- TO ACCOMPANY ANY ANNOUNCEMENT THAT CONGRESS WAS LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO WITH A STATEMENT THAT THERE WAS A SIDE UNDERSTANDING WITH TURKEY CONCERNING CYPRUS.

6. BITSIOS THEN ASKED ME IF THE LEGISLATION TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CONGRESS WOULD BE THE BILL EARLIER DEFEATED IN THE HOUSE WHICH HAD THE PROVISION CONCERNING SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO GREECE. I SAID I WAS NOT SURE WHETHER THE EARLIER BILL OR SOME NEW, REVISED VERSION WOULD BE CONSIDERED. WE DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC-MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO GREECE AND I ASKED IF HE AND CARAMANLIS FAVORED THE INCLUSION IN THE LEGISLATION OF THE ASSISTANCE PROVISION FOR GREECE. BITSIOS AFFIRMED THAT THE GOG WAS, OF COURSE, INTERESTED IN RECEIVING ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S., ALONG THE LINES OF PRESENTATIONS EARLIER MADE BY AVEROFF AND PAPALIGOURAS, BUT HE REFUSED TO EXPRESS ANY
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POSITION ON WHETHER SUCH ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE INCORPORATED IN LEGISLATION LIFTING THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO. HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD PREFER, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE BE TREATED SEPARATELY -- SAYING AT ONE POINT THAT "WE HATE ALWAYS BEING BRACKETED WITH THE TURKS, YOU KNOW*"

7. BITSIOS WENT ON TO EXPRESS SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE RECENT PUBLIC INDICATIONS THAT THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT HAD ACCEPTED THE CONCEPT OF BI-ZONALITY AS FAR AS CYPRUS WAS CONCERNED. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN OF SEVERAL DAYS AGO. HE SAID THAT AS WE HAD DISCUSSED MANY TIMES BEFORE AND AS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN HELSINKI, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT OPPOSED TO A BI-

ZONAL SOLUTION ON CYPRUS BUT THAT SUCH A CONCESSION HAD TO BE PART OF AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT INCLUDING -- SPECIFICALLY - ACCEPTABLE GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE ZONES. TO SAY THAT THE GOG WOULD ACCEPT A BI-ZONAL SOLUTION NO MATTER WHAT OTHER TERMS EXISTED IN THE SETTLEMENT WAS SIMPLY NOT CORRECT. IN ANY CASE, HE SAID, THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT TO TAKE ANY PUBLIC POSITION ON THIS POINT, FEELING THAT IT WAS FOR MAKARIOS AND CLERIDES TO DO THE NEGOTIATING AND MAKE THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

8. WE ALSO DISCUSSED GREECE'S BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH TURKEY AND SEVERAL OTHER POINTS, BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY. KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ATHENS06789
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750309-0484
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750975/aaaacopq.tel
Line Count: 183
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 210911, 75 NICOSIA 2659
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <30 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CYPRUS NEGOTIATIONS: MEETING WITH BITSIOS
TAGS: PFOR, CY, GR, (CLERIDES, GLAFCOS), (BITSIO, DIMITRIOS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006